

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

EB-07 AGR-05 OMB-01 SAI-01 /080 W

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R 061726Z JUL 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6009

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY PORT MORESBY

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 10631

CONCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AS, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET-AUSTRALIAN RELATIONS

1. SUMMARY. DURING JULY 2 CALL ON AMBASSADOR, AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR PLIMSOLL EXPRESSED SOME SURPRISE THAT SOVIETS HAVE REACTED WITH SUCH RESTRAINT TO FRASER'S SPEECHES, BUT ALSO SOME CONFIDENCE THAT RESTRAINT WOULD CONTINUE. END SUMMARY.

2. PLIMSOLL SAID SOVIETS HAVE SO FAR BEEN REMARKABLY RESTRAINED CONCERNING GRASER'S STATEMENTS. THE AUSTRALIAN MINISTER OF STATE TRANSPORT WAS IN MOSCOW WEEK OF JUNE 28, AND THE VISIT WENT VERY WELL, WITH NOTHING SAID BY SOVIETS IN CRITICISM OF AUSTRALIA. A DEPUTY MINISTER IS EXPECTED IN MID-JULY, TO OPEN AN AUSTRALIAN ECONOMIC EXHIBIT, AND ALL SIGNS POINT TO A GOOD VISIT.

3. PLIMSOLL'S ASSESSMENT WAS THAT THE SOVIETS ARE WORRIED ABOUT
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TRENDS IN AUSTRALIAN POLICY, AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT IMPROVING TIES

WITH PRC, BUT DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO DO ABOUT IT.

4. TURNING TO TRADE RELATIONS, HE SAID SOVIETS HAVE NOT BOUGHT ANY MEAT FROM AUSTRALIA, AND DOUBTED THEY WOULD AT THIS DATE. AT SAME TIME, THEY HAVE BOUGHT DOLLARS 100,000 WORTH OF POOR GRADE LEATHER, A PURCHASE HE ASCRIBED TO NEEDS ARISING FROM EARLY SLAUGHTER OF THEIR OWN CATTLE THIS YEAR, AND SOMETHING OF A FIRST.

5. COMMENT. WE NOTE THAT DAY AFTER CONVERSATION, JULY 3, PRAVDA AND IZVESTIYA CAME FORWARD WITH SHARPEST PUBLIC ATTACKS YET ON FRASER, IN THE FORM OF PRAVDA COMMENTARY ON AUSTRALIA BY VSELOVOD KALININ AND IZVESTIYA COMMENTARY ON U.S. BASES IN ASIA BY V. KONDRASHOV. BOTH PAINT AUSTRALIA AS PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF THE PENTAGON AND PEKING. NEVERTHELESS, BOTH ARE RESOLUTELY SORROWFUL AND STICK MAINLY TO RELAYING OUTSIDE OBSERVERS' DOUBTS ABOUT WISDOM OF NEW TRENDS, THUS LEAVING DOOR OPEN FOR LATE CONVERSION. ON BALANCE, THEREFORE, SOVIETS HAVE NOT YET TAKEN UP FRASER'S GAUNTLET.
STOESSEL

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